

Recent tests indicate that an apparently new strain of Infectious Salmon Anemia virus (ISAV) has been detected at a salmon aquaculture site near Jonesport, Maine. This new strain appears to have different effects on salmon compared to the New Brunswick strain of ISAV that has been detected in recent years at several sites in Maine and Canada, and the new strain has not resulted in any increased mortality of salmon at the Jonesport site.

ISAV does not infect humans, and state and federal authorities are monitoring the situation. The virus does not appear to have been carried to the site by people or equipment, and other methods of transmission from the natural environment are being investigated. Biosecurity at the affected site and others has been elevated as a result of the laboratory findings.

The first tests indicating a suspected ISAV presence on the site were reported in late November, 2003, and intensive testing and research has been ongoing since that time. The continuing test results have demonstrated an apparently low prevalence of this strain, and have not indicated that removal of any fish from the site is warranted. In consultation with fish health professionals from many organizations, there has been more frequent and extensive testing at the affected site than in the recent past, including genetic comparisons of the new strain with other known ISAV occurrences in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Maine, and Europe.